The Words To Save Them All

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Category: Half-Life
Genre: Hurt-Comfort, Sci-Fi
Language: English
Status: Completed
Published: 2008-03-25 22:28:43
Updated: 2008-03-25 22:28:43
Packaged: 2016-04-26 21:47:47
Rating: K+
Chapters: 1
Words: 648
Publisher: www.fanfiction.net
Summary: Breen was wrong - he could say the words to stop the rebels. What if he did? Oneshot.

The Words To Save Them All

A/N: A oneshot idea I had. Spoilers for HL2.

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><p>"And yet he refuses to speak the words that could save them all!" Breen crowed.<p>

"Actually, Dr. Breen, he can't stop the Resistance," Freeman said.

Everyone turned to Freeman.

"What do you mean?" Mossman asked.

"Eli Vance can't stop the Resistance. None of us can. Not Eli, not Alyx, not Isaac Kleiner, not Barney Calhoun, not even me."

"If we tell them to put down their weapons, they will assume we are being coerced or controlled. They have been waiting twenty years for this moment. And right now, they are winning. Nobody can stop them, Dr. Breen. Nobodyâ€¦ except _you_."

Breen stepped back.

"Me? What can I do to stop them? They will ignore any words I say!"

"There are two words they will listen to. Two words that can end all the fighting."

"What words are those?"

"'We surrender.'"

Breen was stunned.

"Surrender?"

"You can surrender to them. Order the Combine soldiers to put down their weapons. I can get them to accept your surrender."

Breen thought. There was some truth in Gordon's words. Would that rabble obey Gordon's words if they went against what they expected?

"Dr. Freeman, you have to understand, I don't want a war. Whatever you may believe, everything I have done has been for the benefit of mankind."

"Like surrendering to the Combine?" Eli shot at him.

"We had no chance. You know what would have happened if I hadn't surrendered?"

"What?"

"You know that after the portal storm, mankind retreated to the cities. Well, the Combine went after the cities. As the Combine captured each city, that city would have been subject to nuclear bombardment. The human race would have been all but annihilated. We'd be lucky if a million people survived!"

"And then I learned of all the Combine could offer us. Immortality, travel to the stars, the dreams of centuriesâ€¦ and you would throw all that away?"

"Dr. Freeman, I can't do this. I can't throw away such an opportunity. That would be treason to the human race."

Freeman looked down, then looked back at Breen.

"You may be right. Perhaps _homo sapiens_ might benefit from the Combine. But we'd sacrifice what we are. Those people down there, they don't think of this as humans against aliens. Not when so many humans are on your side, and so many aliens are on our side. The _vortigaunts_ aren't fighting for humanity!"

"What are you getting at, Dr. Freeman?"

"They're fighting for Earth. Our native world. Our civilization. The vortigaunts have chosen to settle here, establish a new homeworld. They're a part of Earth now, and that will never change."

"We don't _need_ the Combine to travel to the stars. We don't _need_ them to achieve immortality. If they can do it, so can we. Getting there sooner isn't worth sacrificing Earth."

Breen wasn't sure about this. Then his desk monitor started beeping.

"Judith, can you check that for me?"

She did.

"It's a report from Delta Sector. They're being shredded by vortigaunts. Andâ€¦" she looked up. "There are CPs fighting alongside the rebels. They've defected."

That was the final straw. If the CPs thought that the cause was hopeless, it was.

"Judith, set up a Breencast for me." Breen typed a code into his desk to release the prisoners.

Immediately, Alyx, Eli, and Gordon converged on each other. Eli was weak on his feet, but Alyx and Gordon supported him.

Breen looked into the monitor. He opened his mouths, and spoke the words to save mankind.

"Citizens of Earth, this is Dr. Wallace Breen. On behalf of all Combine forces on Earth, I offer my unconditional surrender. All Combine forces are to lay down their arms immediately. We surrender."

End
file.